

Forestry Technician (Hotshot/Handcrew), GS-0462-05

Position Number: FS2037

Introductory Statement: This is a standard wildland fire management position description intended for use in the USDA, Forest Service. The position is located on a wildland fire crew. The purpose of the position is wildland fire suppression/management/control as a specialized firefighter with responsibility for the operation and maintenance of specialized tools or equipment.

Other wildland fire related duties may involve fire prevention, patrol, detection, or prescribed burning. The incumbent may be assigned for varying periods of time into one or more types of positions within the wildfire program where the individual's specialized skills are required.

This position is categorized as a Senior Fire Fighter (SFF) position in the Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Standard and Guide as designated by the W.O. Fire and Aviation Management. The IFPM selective placement factors for this position must be attained by October 1, 2010, and thereafter must be met prior to entrance into the position as a condition of hire. Refer to the Forest Service IFPM Standard Position Description Crosswalk for a full description of the selective placement factors.

Ninety (90) days of experience as a primary/rigorous firefighter or equivalent experience outside federal employment is a basic qualification for this position.

This position matches PD# A9089, which was approved by USDA on 11-16-04, C2, for CSRS and FERS primary firefighter coverage under the provisions of 5 U.S.C 8336 (c) and U.S.C 8412 (d).

Crew Member Work 60%

Serves as an experienced firefighter on a hand crew or other related fire suppression crews performing fire suppression and/or fuels management duties under the most adverse conditions of climate, fuels, and terrain. Performs the duties of a fully qualified chain saw operator and chainsaw repair technician. Certified in the use of helicopter long lines. Performs all aspects of wildland and prescribed fire operations including preparation, ignition, monitoring, holding, and mop up. Collects fire weather data, fuel and/or soil moisture samples, maps projects, and maintains records. May on occasion serve as driver of a crew carrier.

Gathers and considers information on weather data, topography, fuel types, and fire behavior in responding to wildland fire incidents. When positioning and deploying personnel and equipment, recommends best approaches and practices to use in protection of the values at risk

Responsible for operation and maintenance of specialized equipment used to respond to wildland and prescribed fire situations. Accomplishes emergency repairs as necessary to permit continued use of equipment. In those instances when the apparatus cannot be used effectively in suppressing the fire, the incumbent takes aggressive control action in attacking the fire, using other means.

Participates in wildland fire and safety training in the techniques, practices, and methods of fire suppression and in the safe, efficient operation and use of tools, equipment, and vehicles used in fireline activities, with emphasis on those used in the particular function assigned. Participates in crew proficiency

checks and drills, safety sessions, and fire critiques. Ensures own and other's welfare and safety in all aspects of the assignment.

Forestry Activities Support 40%

Performs the full range of standardized forestry support duties for fire, timber, silviculture, recreation, wilderness, or research activities. Performs the full range of standardized forestry support duties for fire, timber, silviculture, recreation, wilderness, or research activities.

May inventory fuel beds, prepare associated reports, perform hazard fuel reduction projects, monitor burning conditions, pile vegetation debris and act in assigned positions such as ignition or holding specialist or other designated positions during actual fuel reduction efforts by prescribed fire.

May perform project work such as road and trail maintenance, habitat manipulation, and miscellaneous equipment and facilities maintenance.

May assist higher level workers in forestry/range research efforts; in the marketing of forest/range resources; or in the scientific management, protection, and development of forest/range resources.

Must possess a valid state driver's license and have the ability to operate light vehicles and 4X4s.

May be required to fill-in for other work leaders on established crews.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS:

WORK CAPACITY TEST (WCT) for Wildland Firefighters: This position participates in wildland firefighting activities. Based on the type of work performed, TAKING and PASSING the WCT at the ARDUOUS level is a "condition of employment." The Arduous fitness (Pack) Test requires completing a three (3) mile hike within forty-five (45) minutes, while carrying a forty-five (45) pound pack.

Bargaining Unit Status: Eligible - Coverage is dependent upon unit location.

FIREFIGHTER RETIREMENT COVERAGE: This is a primary/rigorous firefighter position under the provisions of 5 USC 8336(c) (CSRS) and 8412(d) (FERS).

Performs other duties as assigned.

Factor 1- 4 Knowledge Required by the Position

Practical knowledge of fire gained from wildland firefighting experience or participating on-the-ground in prescribed burn operations.

Knowledge of fire behavior including causes of wildland fire, influence of temperature, humidity, wind, topography, slope and fuel moisture conditions, and fuels in order to know where to attack the fire, build fire line, where to be positioned to manage a wildland fire, and to identify hazards. Knowledge of accepted fire safety practices and procedures to prevent injury and loss of life. Knowledge of wildland fire management techniques, methods and conditions to accurately analyze fire circumstances, determine when additional forces may be needed, or determine when circumstances warrant disengagement. Specific technical firefighting knowledge such as, but not limited to handcrew operations to enable the incumbent to function in assigned capacities and to instruct or lead others in those duties if necessary.

Specialized knowledge and necessary certifications such as, chain saw operation and repair, long line

certification, use of specialized equipment used in response to wildland urban interface situations;; wildland fire management and prescribed burns. Knowledge of tactical methods and techniques for use of water and additives in controlling and mopping up fires in order to efficiently and effectively accomplish operations where water is in short supply.

Skill in use of hand tools such as Pulaskis, shovel, McLeod; and power tools including chainsaw, portable pumps to build fireline, control wildland fire, and to perform other non fire related duties. Knowledge of agency and interagency qualification, position task book requirements, and certification standards and procedures adopted by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.

Knowledge and skill of standard first aid procedures sufficient to perform preliminary first aid and triage as necessary.

Knowledge of the organization and the function of cooperative interagency fire organizations such as DOI, USDA, NWCG, NICC, GACC, state and local governments to facilitate wildland fire operations in a multi-jurisdictional setting. Knowledge of related fields such as forestry, range, wildlife, botany, soils and water, cultural and historical resources in order to make informed fire operational decisions. Knowledge of general range/forestry technician work in order to personally perform and lead others in the performance of a variety of work in such areas as hazard tree removal, hazard fuel reduction, prescribed burning, recreation, wildlife and watershed, and in the general facility of vehicle and equipment maintenance and upkeep. Oral and written communication skills sufficient to effectively interact with people at all levels, internal and external to the organization, including the public. Knowledge of fire terminology to communicate with other crewmembers. Ability to perform basic computer technology skills such as word processing, electronic mail, internet use, and specialized fire information databases and programs. Knowledge of appropriate act requirements to include the Equal Opportunity Act, Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, 29 CFR 1604.11(a) Sexual Harassment sufficient to function within a diverse workforce.

Factor 2- 2 Supervisory Controls

The supervisor provides instructions for new assignments. The employee uses initiative in carrying out standard assignments and independently works out solutions to complex

problems related to specific skills. Tactical problems or unfamiliar situations that would require modifying established strategies are referred to supervisor for guidance.

Work is reviewed on the basis of overall effectiveness. New assignments are checked in more detail to insure accuracy and to make sure that instructions were followed.

Factor 3- 2 Guidelines

Most guidelines are in the form of oral instructions and training prior to actual wildland fire suppression activities. General guidelines can be found in agency and bureau published directives such as: wildland fire operations manuals, handbooks, and guides.

Some guidelines are also contained in the prescribed burning and hazard fuel reduction plan, emergency medical services plan, safety plan, and other specific local guides pertinent to the local unit or specific to the type of work being performed.

Since every possible situation cannot be anticipated and covered in training, the employee must use

judgment in applying knowledge, especially in situations where the supervisor is not available for consultation.

Guides such as safety regulations must be applied.

Factor 4- 2 Complexity

Practices and leads fire suppression under the most adverse conditions of climate, fuels, and terrain. As an experienced specialized firefighter is expected to have the technical knowledge to perform in specific fire assignments, (i.e., chain saw operator, faller, etc.) safely and efficiently. Decisions as to what must be done depend, to a considerable degree, on the employee's analysis of the situation and issues involved, and the selected course of action. The work involves conditions and elements that must be identified and analyzed to discern interrelationships.

Factor 5- 2 Scope and Effect

The work involves the execution of specific rules, regulations, or procedures and typically comprises a complete segment of an assignment or project of broader scope. Work involves the execution of specific procedures, techniques, which differ with each fire's fuel type, weather conditions, and topography. The effect of the work performed is to minimize loss of natural resources, improvements, property or life. The performance of the crew contributes to the overall effectiveness of the wildland fire management effort.

Factor 6- 1 Personal Contacts

Contacts are with coworkers and other members of wildland fire management suppression organizations.

Factor 7- 1 Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are made to exchange information about wildland fire suppression activities and needs. Contacts may also be required to coordinate these needs with other land managing agencies.

Meets and deals on day-to-day matters with co-workers and public land users in order to exchange information.

Factor 8- 3 Physical Demands

Arduous: Duties involve rigorous fieldwork requiring above average physical performance, endurance and superior conditioning. Work requires prolonged standing, walking over uneven ground, and recurring bending, reaching, lifting and carrying of items weighing over 50 pounds and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar strenuous activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity.

Duties include demands for strenuous activities in emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended periods of time. Operation of some specialized fire equipment can place extended physical stress on incumbent during fire activities.

Incumbent must pass the work capacity test for arduous positions.

Factor 9- 3 Work Environment

The work is primarily performed in forest and desert environments in steep terrain where surfaces may be extremely uneven, rocky, covered with thick tangled vegetation, smoky conditions, etc. Temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees F and fall below freezing. Risks include smoke inhalation, fire entrapment, snake or insect bites and stings, exposure to excessive machinery noise, and falling and

rolling material. Personnel must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Incumbent may be required to live in backcountry camps for extended periods of time. The hazardous nature of the work requires that personal protective equipment be worn (boots, hardhat, gloves, flame resistant clothing, etc.). Work may require travel by light fixed wing or rotor wing aircraft.